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BRIEF ARTICLES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

UNA PROPAGANDA IMAGINARIA

Gran polvareda se ha alzado en Nueva York con motivo de una controversia desagradable, que al fin resultó de provecho, aunque habrá de dejar malas impresiones.

Nació un rumor de donde nacen todos los rumores: del vacío y de la ociosidad. Vacío de cerebros y ociosidad de espíritus. Alguien lo acogió, llegó a la prensa y, como el humo, cundió por el espacio. Ojalá que, como el humo, desaparezca, y que deje siquiera una buena lección; la que encierran los viejos proverbios castellanos: "Al buen callar llaman Sancho," y "En boca cerrada no entran moscas".

Dijose, y se repitió, y se dió a la prensa, que los profesores de alemán, despechados de ver sus salones vacíos, temerosos de que sus cátedras quedaran vacantes como forzosa consecuencia de la vacuidad de sus aulas, y sintiéndose obligados por inclinación desleal a combatir a este país, atacando a uno de sus aliados, dieron en el tema de arrebatar a las cátedras de francés sus estudiantes y conducirlos como incautos corderillos—¡mire usted qué chuscada!—no al matadero ni una escuela de germanismo, sino adonde menos se le pudiera ocurrir al tonto más huero de mollera: a las cátedras de español. Y hete aquí cómo al vaciarse los cursos de alemán, estos empecatados hispano—parlantes hicieron su agosto y se vieron en la opulencia . . . !

¿Cómo explicar esta propaganda realizada con tan aviesos fines? Pues muy sencillamente: Los alumnos de los cursos de francés aprenderían con el idioma, la historia, los ideales y todas las bellas cosas de Francia y se convertirían en enemigos acérrimos de Alemania. Para evitarlo nada mejor que mandarlos a las clases de español. ¡Como España no tiene historia, ni ideales, ni cosas bellas, cátate que quien estudie el español resultará un prusiano rematado!

Una investigación cuidadosa ha demostrado que los rumores tenían una base tan sutil como el hilo de una telaraña y tan inasible como el humo de un cigarrillo turco.

Los hechos demuestran que las clases de francés han cre-

cido notablemente al declinar las de alemán; que no ha existido tal propaganda; y que de haber existido hubiera sido tan innecesaria como estúpida. Innecesaria, porque el español se ha impuesto por sus propios méritos sin ayuda de nadie; estúpida, porque la abundancia de alumnos de español en nada puede ayudar a los maestros de alemán.

Por lo demás, esta discusión ha servido para demostrar de una manera patente que el español tiene bellezas que no ceden en nada a las de ninguna otra lengua del mundo; que los ideales españoles son tan altos como lo pueden ser los de dieciocho repúblicas de América fundadas en instituciones análogas a las de este gran país, y como lo pueden ser los de la gran nación española, la leona madre de estos dieciocho cachorros, la nación en donde se han dicho cosas tan bellas y tan grandes como las que llenan el siglo de oro, y como las que se dicen ahora, en estos años no desmerecedores de aquella gran centuria. Se ha demostrado que, si a comparar vamos, en lo que más puede gloriarse Francia, por lo menos, en lo que más suele ser alabada, que es en su literatura, tiene que reconocer deudas antiguas, y no pequeñas, contraídas con España; y que, en materia mercantil y, sobre todo, en materia social, el español tiene que ser, por la fuerza lógica de los hechos, lengua que sólo ceda la primacía al inglés en nuestros establecimientos de enseñanza.

Es de explicarse que no pocos catadráticos de francés estén tristes por los protectores que les han salido. Pero deben tranquilizarse. Estas imprudencias no desdoran en nada ni al respetable conjunto de catedráticos, ni implican menoscabo en la admiración que la bella lengua de Francia inspira justamente a todos, y a los maestros de español no menos que a los mismos profesores de francés.

GUILLERMO A. SHERWELL

Presidente del Capítulo Neoyorquino de la Asociación Americana de Profesores de Español.

UNA GRAMÁTICA DEL SIGLO DE ORO

El año 1623 se publicó en Londres una Gramática de la lengua castellana, titulada *Arte breve y compendiosa para aprender a leer, escribir, pronunciar y hablar la lengua española*. El autor de esta obra, Juan de Luna, examina la cuestión del “método natural” (¡en

el siglo XVII!) sin emplear esta fórmula, por supuesto. En su opinión la teoría de que es mejor aprender una lengua "sin reglas es contra toda razón".

Sin embargo, Juan de Luna considera más importante el buen maestro o profesor que el libro de que se vale, y en esto tiene razón. Léase lo que dice Juan de Luna en su *Arte breve y compendiosa*:

"El provecho que de esta arte sacarás, no lo puedes conocer si no has estudiado algún tiempo sin ella, y experimentado la falta que te hace el carecer del conocimiento de estos verbos irregulares, y sin duda saldrás del error en que muchos están creyendo ser mejor aprender una lengua sin reglas, lo cual es contra toda razón; porque las reglas, fuera de que facilitan el camino, hacen que no se olvide tan presto lo que una vez se ha aprendido, y que después de olvidado, por medio de ellas por sí mismo pueda cada uno reparar la falta.

"Esta opinión errónea de que es mejor aprender una lengua sin arte, la fomentan muchos maestros de ella, que no sabiendo ellos ni entendiendo las reglas, dicen ser mejor aprender por un discurso familiar.

"Digo, pues, que para aprender bien una lengua se ha de buscar una buena gramática, buenos libros, y un buen maestro.

"El buen maestro es el todo, para aprender una lengua; la elección del cual no se ha de hacer sin que preceda la calificación de alguno que hable bien, porque no todos los que enseñan las saben enseñar, y así el mayor error que uno puede hacer es aprender una lengua de quien la habla mal".

E. C. HILLS

SPANISH THE LANGUAGE FOR AFTER-WAR BUSINESS MEN

Why is Spanish a very important study for the college student? Why will it prove a valuable money-earning asset at the termination of the present world crisis?

Let us glance backward and see what steps have been taken to develop the Latin American trade relations. First, aroused by the agitation of newspapers and export journals, far-seeing American corporations and export houses have established business connections by dint of persistent and individual effort.

Secondly, the construction of both the Panama Canal and the Great Pan-American Railway has stimulated an active interest. Do you realize that the distance between New York and the Pacific ports of South America has been shortened 5000 miles? Do you realize that when the Pan-American Railway is completed it will extend from Canada to Patagonia, a distance of 10,000 miles? At present 6,500 miles have been completed and the remaining 3,500 miles are either under construction or projected. Now one can go from New York to Guatemala by rail. Banking and steamship facilities are being steadily developed. These important factors spell to the intelligent mind how enormous will be the economic development of Latin America in the present century.

Thirdly, the European War. How was Latin America—and by Latin America I mean twenty Latin American Republics, 65,000,000 people—affected by the war? The salient effects were as follows:

First, the commercial relations of the Latin American importers with Europe were broken off suddenly and in the case of Germany and Belgium were completely severed.

Secondly, the European market for Latin American products was adversely affected, in fact, rudely terminated. Chaos reigned supreme.

Thirdly, this international situation caused the awakening of a real interest on the part of the government and the people of the United States in Latin America and vice versa.

This new interest has placed emphasis upon the geographical segregation and the necessary commercial unity of the countries in the western hemisphere. The importance of the trade of the United States and Latin America has not been exaggerated, as is so often declared. This is shown conclusively by the fact that this commerce has increased nearly one hundred per cent in the last eight or nine years, and is still increasing. Where will be the field of commercial opportunity, endeavor and activity at the conclusion of the great conflict? It must be very evident to any thinking person that it will require some years of rehabilitation on the part of Europe to remove the vivid vestiges left by the ruthless, devastating engine of war. Pause and think of the innumerable industrial plants and commercial establishments throughout the United States straining their resources to the utmost in the out-

put of war necessities; in what direction will they for the most part bend their energies when this old world of ours assumes its normal aspect?

The clear thinkers, the students who can understand that in the present we are making the future, have seen the hand-writing on the wall, that during the next decade the Spanish language will be of more practical value to the average young American than any other modern language with the exception, of course, of our own glorious tongue.

How many years is it advisable to study the Spanish language? The first year the foundation of the lingual edifice is laid; we are initiated into the mysteries of grammar, composition and conversation. The second year we continue the erection of our "building" slowly and surely, working from the abstract to the concrete; we assemble to a practicable, working force the knowledge assimilated in the previous year. We are beginning to become conscious of our growing power and of the great value of our increasing knowledge. The third year, with increased vigor and great spontaneity of interest, we culminate our study with the most practical work possible. Now we have a personal satisfaction that we possess an inserting wedge, possibly a foundation for a very successful business career.

In conclusion, I wish to say to those students who are intending to enter the different ramifications of the professional or business world that *common sense and sound judgment* indicate that the Spanish language, either in the United States or in Latin America, will be a stepping-stone for their future progress and advancement at the termination of the war.

GEORGE F. McCARTHY

BOSTON UNIVERSITY, C. B. A.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, NEW YORK CITY, ANNOUNCEMENT

Department of Education, City of New York,
July 2, 1917.

To Teachers of Spanish:

There is need in the high schools of this city of experienced teachers of Spanish. The number of students who elect this language is rapidly increasing and the number of candidates for li-

censes to teach Spanish does not keep pace with the increase in positions. For that reason it is thought desirable to place before you the advantages open in our schools to well trained teachers of that language. These may be enumerated as follows:

(1) A schedule of salaries that is equaled by that of few cities of the United States. This schedule begins at \$900 per annum and reaches the maximum of \$2,650 per annum. The annual increase after \$1,300, the fourth-year salary, is reached is \$150. Credit is given for school service satisfactory in quality and character prior to entrance into New York City schools. Service must be approved in order that further advance in salary may be had at the end of the sixth year and at the end of the ninth and twelfth years.

(2) Teachers are appointed for a probationary period of three years, and thereafter enjoy a permanent or good-behavior tenure.

(3) A teacher of experience and ability who has rendered a number of years' service in the city schools may qualify in the examinations given at occasional intervals for license as "first assistant teacher," and upon appointment as such may attain the maximum salary of \$3,150. Separate departments of Spanish are gradually being formed in the various high schools. There are 24 high schools at present in this city and there are but three first assistant teachers whose specialty is Spanish. The likelihood seems strong that in the next several years a number of first assistants in Spanish will be needed.

(4) A liberal and sound pension system for New York City teachers has recently been created by State law. This law permits the retirement of a teacher on half-pay at the end of thirty-five years of service (including accredited service in schools outside of New York City) or at 65 years of age, provided he shall have made such contribution to the pension fund as the table of rates requires.

(5) New York City provides exceptional opportunities for the teacher of Spanish who is ambitious to improve his knowledge and his ability to use the Spanish language. The Hispanic Society of America, a richly endowed organization, has here a beautiful museum of Spanish art and a library of Spanish books and manuscripts which is without equal outside of Spain. There is here a large Spanish-speaking population with its churches and nu-

merous societies. This city is the chief center of the export and import trade between Spanish lands and the United States, and the Spanish-American business houses are very numerous. Able teachers of Spanish may find many opportunities to teach that language in evening schools, especially in the evening high schools conducted by the Board of Education, in which schools, as well as in the day high schools, there has been marked lack of Spanish teachers during the past four years. The salary for service in these schools is five dollars per evening of two hours, and there are 120 sessions per year.

THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

500 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA: REPORT ON
SYLLABUS FOR SPANISH
Presented December 27, 1917

The committee appointed to revise the proposed course in Spanish (originally recommended in 1910) begs leave to present the following statement, covering a four years' course in secondary schools or a two years' course in college. The elementary course corresponds to the first two years in secondary schools or to the first year in college; and the intermediate and advanced courses correspond to a third and a fourth year respectively in secondary schools or to a second year in college. It is assumed that in secondary schools there will be four or five recitations a week, for at least thirty-two weeks of each year.

In view of the fact that, in our Western Hemisphere, Spanish is the language of millions of men with whom we have many interests in common, it is urged that teachers call the attention of students to the more striking variations of pronunciation from standard Castilian which are in use in Spanish-America, that some of the textbooks be by Spanish-American authors, and that the textbooks embrace works dealing with the geography, history, and customs of Spanish-America as well as of Spain. Moreover, practical considerations arising in connection with the study of Spanish in this country suggest a certain amount of attention to the training of students in commercial correspondence and usages; teachers are advised to pay regard to such considerations, avoiding, of course, undue specialization in the premises.

The desirable aims and methods of instruction in Spanish may be summarized as follows:

Elementary Course

The primary purposes of the elementary work are to teach (a) accurate pronunciation of Spanish (as spoken in both Spain and Spanish-America), (b) the understanding of spoken Spanish, (c) the translation of simple, idiomatic English phrases and sentences into their equivalent simple, idiomatic Spanish, (d) the expression in spoken Spanish of ideas about the usual experiences of life and also about the content of the texts used in the class. Some of the methods to be followed are: (1) reading aloud by both class and teacher, (2) dictation by the teacher, (3) memorization by the student of Spanish passages of conversational prose and of simple verse (fables, etc.), (4) translation, oral and written, of English into Spanish, with much use of English sentences based on a Spanish text, as well as of a composition-book, (5) questioning the class in Spanish about the material provided by the grammar, composition-book, reader or text, and requiring answers in Spanish. Readers or literary texts should not merely be translated into English; students should be trained to reproduce in Spanish the ideas which they have translated and others like them. All this is to be accompanied by constant drill in the rudiments of grammar and, especially, in the inflection of the verb.

Books: *First half*: A grammar; an elementary reader.

Second half: A grammar; a composition-book; simple texts (200 pages).

Advanced Course

The advanced work should be a continuation of the elementary work, with certain added features, such as (a) conversation and, in general, much expression in spoken Spanish of connected ideas and (b) the translation of connected English prose into Spanish. Some of the advisable methods are (1) the discussion in Spanish by the class of the content of the texts read or of the main facts of Spanish or Spanish-American geography, history, and customs, for the study of which the teacher will provide the material, (2) the preparation of résumés of Spanish material, which the students deliver in writing or give orally in the class-room, (3) the reproduction, orally or in writing, of Spanish anecdotes, jokes, or newspaper articles, told or read to the class by the teacher, (4) the

writing of themes and letters in Spanish about events of current or personal interest or about the books which are being studied in class, (5) the use of a composition-book. All this is to be accompanied by continued review of the grammatical rules with particular attention to the verb system and to salient facts of syntax.

Books: *First half*: A grammar; a composition-book; intermediate texts (300-400 pages).

Second half: A grammar; a composition-book or, possibly, a manual of commercial correspondence; advanced texts (400-500 pages).

Repeating the reserves already established by the committee of fifteen for French and German (see *Publications*, vol. XXVI, no. 1, p. xiii), to the effect that the list is invested with no canonical authority and is intended to be merely suggestive of standards, this committee ventures to propose the following

Typical Texts

1st Year: A carefully graded reader for beginners; Juan Valera, *El pájaro verde*; Pérez Escrich, *Fortuna*; Altamirano, *La navidad en las montañas*.

2nd Year: A collection of short stories by different authors; a collection of brief comedies; a collection of easy lyrics (Spanish and Spanish-American) or of verse fables; a Spanish or Spanish-American historical reader; Alarcón, *El Capitán Veneno*; Cañón and Aza, *Zaragüeta*; Frontaura, *Las tiendas*; Quintana, *Vasco Núñez de Balboa*; Jorge Isaacs, *Maria*; Palacio Valdés, *José*; Márquez, *Amalia*.

3rd Year: Taboada, *Cuentos alegres*; Isla's version of the *Gil Blas*; Selgas, *La mariposa blanca*; Pérez Galdós, *Doña Perfecta*; Palacio Valdés, *La Hermana San Sulpicio*; a collection of essays dealing with Spanish or Spanish-American life and customs; Moratín, *El sí de las niñas*; Larra, *Partir a tiempo*; plays of the Alvarez Quintero brothers; plays of Benavente.

4th Year: Novels of Blasco Ibáñez, Fernán Caballero, Pardo Bazán, Pereda, and Valera; Cervantes, *Don Quijote* (selections); plays of Benavente, Bretón de los Herreros, Echegaray, García Gutiérrez, Gil y Zárate, Gómez de Avellaneda, Hartzenbusch, López de Ayala, Martínez Sierra, Núñez de Arce, Pérez Galdós, Tamayo y Baus; an anthology of verse; Bécquer (selections).

The Committee also urges every secondary school in which Spanish is taught to have in its library several Spanish-English and English-Spanish dictionaries, the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, and such manuals of the history of Spanish and Spanish-American literature as those of Fitzmaurice-Kelly, Ticknor, and Coester.

Respectfully submitted,

J. D. M. FORD, *Chairman*

J. P. WICKERSHAM CRAWFORD

E. R. GREENE

R. H. KENISTON

F. B. LUQUIENS

COMMITTEES APPOINTED

President Wilkins has appointed the following committees which are to report at the next annual meeting:

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